

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 1374 without my signature.

The Gulf State hurricanes serve as a serious reminder of the importance of an integrated effort in protecting California against our own disasters. This is a priority for my administration. Part of that is a review of all the agencies, boards and commissions that have any role in disaster preparedness and relief. The Seismic Safety Commission is a stand alone advisory body for the state and local governments on earthquake safety.

Because many of the functions are duplicative of what the California Building Standards Commission and the Division of State Architect, the California Performance Review (CPR) recommended the elimination of the Commission and recommended that its functions be transferred to the Department of General Services, under which the Division of the State Architect currently resides.

Since we are reviewing how best to use the expertise the Commission provides, it is premature to extend the assessment that supports the Commission through 2013. The operation of the Commission will not be in jeopardy since their current funding source—a fee on commercial and residential insurance policies—will remain in effect through 2007.

I have directed the State and Consumer Services Agency to work with the author, the Commission, Office of Emergency Services, the Division of State Architect, the California Business Standards Commission and other stakeholders to explore further opportunities for enhanced seismic safety and increased coordination among the various state agencies involved with seismic issues.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger